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ENGLISH VISIBLE SPEECH FOR THE MILLION;

FOR COMMUNICATING THE EXACT PRONUNCIATION OF THE LANGUAGE TO
NATIVE OR FOREIGN LEARNERS,
AND FOR TEACHING CHILDREN AND ILLITERATE ADULTS
TO READ IN A FEW DAYS.



BY
ALEX. MELVILLE BELL, F.E.I.S., F.R.S.S.A.,
LECTURER ON ELOCUTION IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON,
AUTHOR OF 'PRINCIPLES OF SPEECH AND CURE OF STAMMERING,' 'ELOCUTIONARY MANUAL,'
'STANDARD ELOCUTIONIST,' 'EMPHASIZED LITURGY,'
'REPORTER'S MANUAL,' &C. &C.

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Address : 18 Harrington Square, N.W.

[1868]

ENGLISH VISIBLE SPEECH.

IN the Inaugural Edition of 'VISIBLE SPEECH' it was stated, that, by means of the self-interpreting Universal Alphabet which constitutes the system, a person of ordinary capacity would LEARN TO READ in a few days. It might have been added, that an ILLITERATE person may even be HIS OWN INSTRUCTOR! This little Work affords the means of *experimentally establishing* both of these facts.

Any person who can merely *pronounce the* NUMBERS 1 to 8 in the ordinary way, and *name the* OBJECTS represented in the Alphabetic Table (page 9,) may be immediately taught to READ, or may easily TEACH HIMSELF.

The words in the Alphabetic Table exemplify every variety of English sound according to a minutely exact analysis; and *uniformity of pronunciation* will be certainly attained by all readers who master the system.

When the names of the Numbers or Objects are pronounced dialectically, or in some peculiar manner, the sounds of the key-words should at first be heard from the voice of a teacher. Only radical differences, however,—such as *ae, yae, yin*, &c., for 'one,'—will be of consequence. Shades of diversity in vowel sound—such as *whEEP* for 'whip,' *doag* for 'dog,' varieties of *win, wan, won*, for 'one,' &c., and all minor differences among the elements, will ultimately correct each other by the VISIBLE RELATIONS of the alphabetic characters.

The object of Visible Speech is not—as some have supposed—to supersede ordinary letters. No revolution in national orthography is aimed at. The system simply furnishes a KEY TO ALL LETTERS here and elsewhere, and an INTERNATIONAL medium in which every Language may be expressed with UNIVERSAL LEGIBILITY.

The Visible Speech Alphabet being, however, much simpler than other alphabets, the system has an additional applicability to the teaching of the illiterate, in all countries, to read their native tongue. This utility is altogether new—created by Visible Speech—and the system does not therefore in this respect stand in any degree of rivalry with common writing. Common letters can never be learned without such an expenditure of time, as puts the acquisition of Reading beyond the reach of toilers for their daily bread. The staunchest advocates for our historical spelling may thus, equally with the opponents of a phonetic orthography, become the advocates for a special system of Letters which may co-exist with the old and venerated A B C, and with other old alphabets, and which fulfils a class of international and social purposes for which the latter were not intended, and for which they never can by any modifications be adapted.

The grand results attainable by this first application of the Invention of 'Visible Speech,' are :

I. English-speaking learners—illiterate or otherwise, and whether children

or adults—will, from the known names of eight numbers and sixteen objects pictorially represented, speedily learn to read every word in the English language.

II. Vernacular readers of this system will acquire the pronunciation of FOREIGN LANGUAGES with native accuracy, without hearing them spoken, and from printed characters alone.

III. Foreigners who master the sounds of the twenty-four key words, will learn to pronounce English exactly as it is spoken by those 'to the manner born.'

The Inaugural Edition of 'VISIBLE SPEECH'* develops the complete Theory of the System, the physiological relations of the Sounds of all languages, and the principles of their representation by correlated Symbols. The book is, consequently, intended for readers 'few and fit.' The present little Work is for the Million, and, literally, requires only that the beginner should be able to *count his fingers!*

It is not pretended that reading will be as easily mastered without, as with the aid of a teacher, but simply that, in connection with vernacular reading, oral instruction is not indispensable. The learner will make all the better progress for being *told* at first—what he would, however, ultimately discover for himself—that *straight-line* letters denote VOWELS, or open throat-sounds; that *curved* letters denote CONSONANTS, or close mouth-sounds; and that all elements formed at any one part of the mouth are represented by symbols or letters turned in one *corresponding direction*.

The teacher may also, with advantage, assist the learner by letting him *hear* the first few words analysed into their elementary sounds,—as the word 'three' into its three elements 'th-r-ee,'—that the nature of the Visible Speech letters may be clearly comprehended. After a few such examples, the beginner cannot fail to make rapid progress.

The following theoretical particulars are added for the information of Teachers who do not possess the larger work :

EXPLANATION OF CONSONANT LETTERS.

1. The *lines of curvature* of the BACK of the tongue† (C), the arched FRONT of the tongue (O), the raised POINT of the tongue (U), and of the LIP (D), are common to all consonants formed at these various parts of the mouth. Thus :

'Back' (of the tongue) C C C C as in *neck, leg, ink,† sing.*
'Front' (") O as in *yes.*
'Point' (") U U U U U U as in *lit, lid, lint, linn, writ, hit, hill.*
'Lip,' D D D D 3 3 as in *cap, cab, lamp, lamb, wife, wives.*

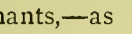
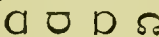
2. MIXED curves represent consonants formed by the two parts of the mouth denoted by the component curves; the symbol Q, for instance, being equivalent to CO, and signifying that the front of the tongue is arched and the point raised *at the same time*. Thus :


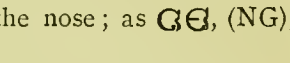


'Front-mixed' (with Point) Q Q Q Q . . . as in *seal, zeal, thin, then.*
'Point-mixed' (with Front) U U as in *bush, rouge.*
'Lip-mixed' (with Back) D D as in *whey, way.*


* Published by Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., 4to, price 15s.

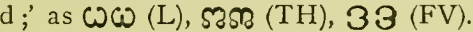


† See Diagram on Title-page.

‡ See Notes on the English Sounds, p. 15.

3. The physiological sign of VOICE is a straight line (I); and therefore those of the preceding letters which have a straight line within the organic curve are *vocal* consonants,—as  (G D B Z), &c.; and letters without a central straight line are *non-vocal* consonants,—as  (K T P S), &c.

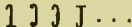
4. The sign of NASAL quality is  (the line of curvature of the soft palate—the nasal valve*), and therefore the letters which have this sign incorporated are formed by passing the breath or the voice through the nose; as  (NG),  (N),  (M).

5. When the passage of the mouth is completely closed by the symbolized organ, the ends of the organic curve are 'shut' by a connecting line; as  (KG 'hard,' TD, PB).


6. When the symbolized part of the mouth DIVIDES the passage for the breath or the voice, so as to allow only of *lateral* emission, the organic curve is indented or 'divided'; as  (L),  (TH),  (FV).

EXPLANATION OF VOWEL LETTERS.

7. The sign of VOICE (a straight line) is common to all the vowel letters; a subordinate symbol or 'definer' being added to denote the part of the mouth which modifies the vowel. Thus:

'Back' of the tongue [to left]  as in *mention, up, ask, arm.*


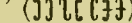
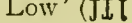
'Front' of the tongue [to right]  as in *eel, ill, ale, air, ell, an.*

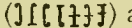




'Mixed' (back & front) [to left & right]  as in *places, fatal, sir.*

8. When the LIPS are contracted, or drawn across the aperture of the mouth, so that the quality of the vowel is 'rounded,' a symbolic bar is drawn across the vowel line. Thus:

'Back-Round,'  as in *pool, pull, old, ore, all, on.*

'Mixed-Round,'  as in *pleasure, orator.*

9. The 'definer' for vowels stands at the top, the bottom, or at both ends of the straight line, according as the symbolized part of the tongue is 'High' () 'Mid' () or 'Low' (.

10. The letters with solid *points* as their 'definers' () are PRIMARY vowels, or those most allied to consonants [see Explanation of 'Glides']; the letters with open *hooks* are WIDE vowels, or those which have the inner cavities of the mouth and the throat most fully expanded. Otherwise, the pairs of vowels , , , , &c., have respectively the same positions of the tongue, &c.

EXPLANATION OF GLIDES.

11. Primary Consonants and Primary Vowels result from similar configurations of the parts of the mouth, but with the difference,—that, for consonants, the passage between the organs is narrow and yielding, so that a *fricative* sound of hissing or buzzing accompanies the emission of the breath or the voice; while, for vowels, the passage is expanded and firm, and the voice flows through the free resonant tube without accompanying sibilation. GLIDES are sounds of

* See Diagram on Title-page.

an intermediate quality—without the fricativeness of consonants, or the sonorous purity of vowels. Glides are, like consonants, merely *transitional* sounds; and they differ from vowels in that respect only. Vowels have a ‘fixed configuration’ throughout their duration, and to this these elements owe their effect in forming *syllables*. Glides unite with vowels to form *DIPHTHONGS* or *monosyllabic* double sounds.

12. Glides are represented by the ‘Voice-line,’ with an organic curve subordinately added. Thus :

‘Voice’ Glide, . . . I	(a non-syllabic sound of ʋ)	as in weary, fiery, &c.
‘Front’ Glide, . . . ʌ	(a vowelized ʋ)	as in die, day, boy, &c.
‘Point’ Glide, . . . ʏ	(a vowelized ʋ)	as in ear, air, ore, &c.
‘Lip Round’ Glide, ʔ	(a vowelized ʋ)	as in cow, house, know, &c.

EXPLANATION OF MODIFIERS.

13. The sign of *PROLONGATION* is †. This symbol is used to distinguish the ‘quantities’ of identical vowels, as in watch (ʃ) and wall (ʃ†); meal (I†) and millic [French] (I).

14. The same sign is employed also to denote a momentary ‘holding’ of consonants, as in app^lc, mutton, &c., where L and N, without vowels, have the effect of *syllables*. The L in ‘battle-axe’ (ʋ†) is thus distinguished from that in ‘atlas’ (ʋ); and the N in ‘lightening’ (ʋ† when a trisyllable), from that in ‘lightning’ (ʋ).

15. The sign ' denotes the *ac'cented* syllable of a word. The same sign, inverted, denotes the accented word in a sentence—the ‘emphatic’ word. The ‘accent’ is placed *before* the syllable or word to which it refers.

16. To save the necessity of inserting the ‘accent’ in every word, the *RULE* has been adopted in Visible Speech printing, that :—*The accent is always on the first syllable, unless otherwise expressed.*

The preceding explanations are intended to qualify the Reader to *teach* the system, or to facilitate his own acquisition of the new science of ‘Visible Speech.’ For the use of *pupils*, all theoretical matter may be dispensed with; and a ‘CLASS-PRIMER,’ consisting of a separate impression of the *DIAGRAMS*, the *ALPHABETIC TABLE*, and the *READING EXERCISES* in this Work, has been prepared, which may be obtained of the Publishers, or, by order, of any Bookseller.*

The Scriptures and other books should, of course, be printed in the New Alphabet, for the benefit of those who master the initiatory lessons. The assistance of Governments *should* be extended to such a work; but means will doubtless be provided from some source for the creation of a Visible Speech Literature, when Readers are prepared to profit by it.

Let a small band of Educational Volunteers devote their services to the promulgation of this system, and an *illiterate adult* may, in a short time, be a *rare phenomenon in any civilized country*.

It is only necessary to add, that the Speech-Letters in this Work are

* ‘Class-Primer of English Visible Speech,’ price Sixpence.

CAPITALS, small types not having yet been cast. When a larger Reading-book is demanded, the 'lower-case' letters will be indispensable ; and they will be found preferable both for ease of legibility and for typographic beauty. The forms of the letters are identical in both alphabets ;—the only difference being, that the lines of 'lower-case' vowels *ascend* or *descend* beyond the consonant curves. Thus :

af†, instead of Cf†, (*Key*.)

NOTES ON THE DIAGRAMS, at page 8.

- I. Each of the positions of the mouth shown in the three Diagrams in the first column, produces four Consonants. Thus :

□□□ The mouth-passage closed (and opened) by means of the symbolized organ.

◻◻◻ The same actions, with a murmur of vocal sound during the contact.

◻◻◻ The same actions (voiceless) with the nasal passage open.

◻◻◻ The same actions, with the nasal passage open and the voice sounding.

The letter ◻ is separately illustrated (3rd Diagram of 2nd column), in order to show the means by which the breath, or the voice, is admitted to the nose in pronouncing the six nasals ◻ ◻ ◻ ◻ ◻ ◻.

- II. Each of the nine vowel configurations produces four vowels :

I. Primary, as ʃ ; II. Round, as ʒ ; III. Wide, as ʒ ; IV. Wide-Round, as ʒ.

This principle being understood, learners who know only the English sounds, will find themselves able to pronounce foreign and unheard vowels by means of their 'visible' relations to English elements. Thus ʃʃ are seen to be the same as ʃʃ, but without the cross bar ; that is, the sounds of ʃʃ have the same lingual positions as ʃʃ (oo, aw), but without contraction of the lips. So, likewise, ʃʃ are seen to be the same as ʃʃ, with the sign of 'round' quality added ; that is, ʃʃ are simply the vowels ʃʃ (eel, ell) pronounced with the lips contracted.

- III. 'High' vowels have the closest labial contraction, and 'low' vowels the broadest ; as illustrated in the Diagrams of the '*Positions of the Lips for 'round' vowels.*' Thus :

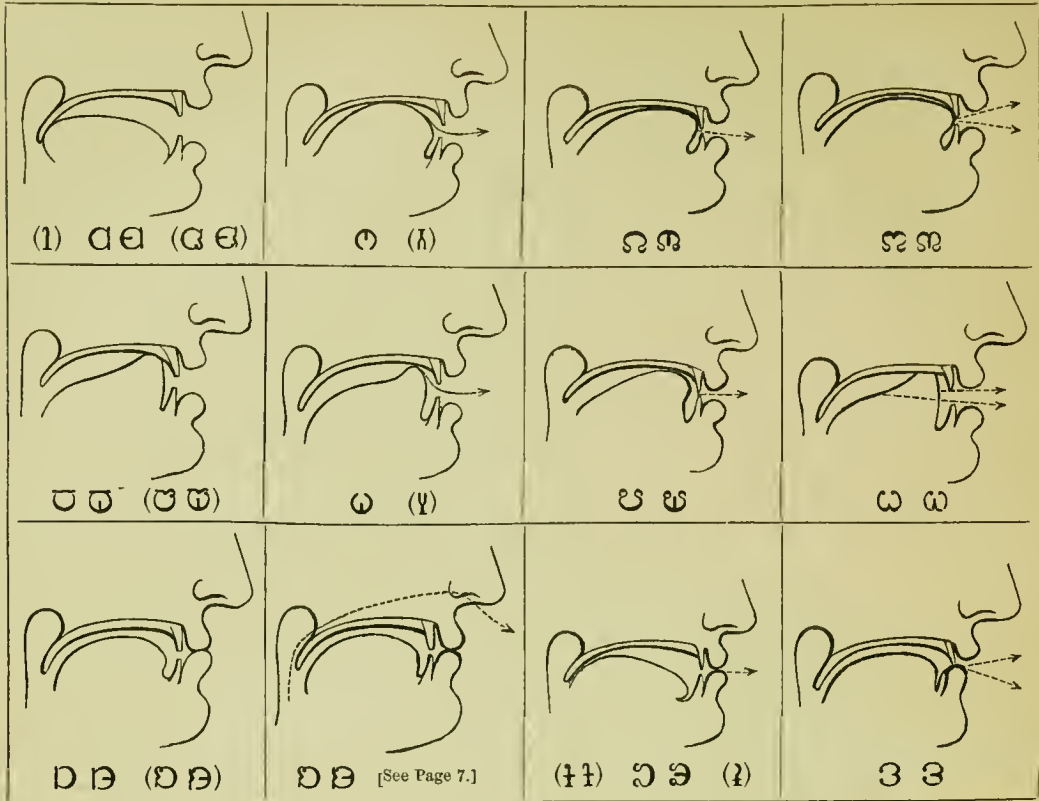
ʃ (oo) has the lips as in No. 1 ; ʒ (ō) as in No. 2 ; and ʒ (aw) as in No. 3.

- IV. The Diagrams showing the '*Positions of the Tongue for 'front' vowels,*' are intended to help the reader to a clear conception of the organic cause of vowel variety. The eye is supposed to look down on the tongue through the roof of the mouth.

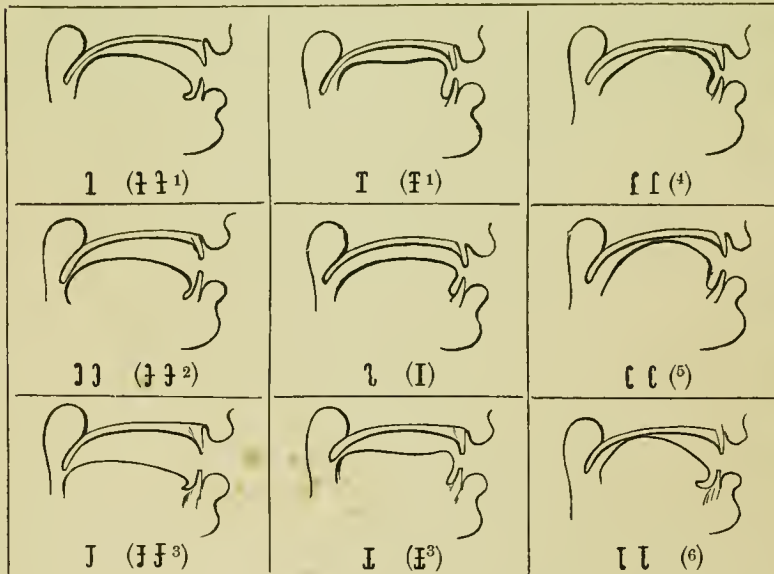
The difference between Primary and Wide Vowels cannot be illustrated by diagrams. The expansion of the cavity of the mouth for the 'Wide' sounds will, however, be *felt* in pronouncing any of the pairs of vowels, as ʃʃ (eel, ill), ʃʃ (ale, air), ʃʃ (ell, an), ʒʒ (must, mast), ʃʃ pool, pull), &c.

ORGANIC FORMATION OF THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF SPEECH.

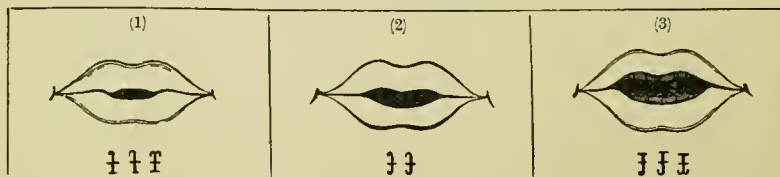
I. CONSONANTS.



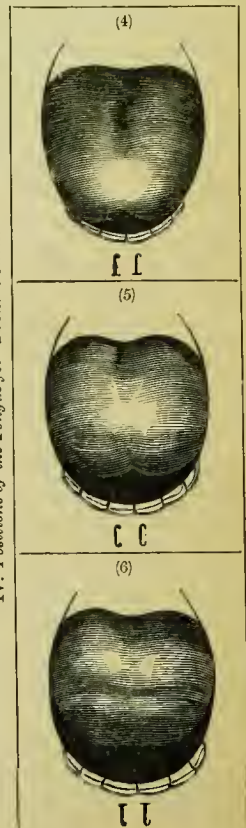
II. VOWELS.


















III. Positions of the Lips for 'Round' Vowels.



IV. Positions of the Tongue for 'Front' Vowels.



188018 1831818 18 3181801 801183,
 18018018 18 81 81808 18 818018 188 18881880.
 [ENGLISH ALPHABET OF VISIBLE SPEECH,
Expressed in the Names of Numbers and Objects.]

[Pronounce the Nos.]	81808. [Names.]	[Name the Objects.]	81808	[Name the Objects.]	81808
1.	818		818		818
2.	811		8183		818
3.	8011		811		818
4.	318		31818		01818
5.	3183		818		818
6.	8180		818		81881
7.	81801		8180		{ 81808 188 818 (8181801) }
8.	18		18018		

18818818. [EXERCISE.]

818 818 818
One by one.

811 18 8011
Two or three.

318 18 8180

3183 1 8018
Five o'clock.

018 8180 8180

81801-81801
Seven-thirty.

18 81 818

818 18 81803

81808 811, 318

81808 8011, 8180

318 188 318, 18

8180 188 811, 180301

81808 18 80180

811, 1 81801

81803, 1 81801

81808, 1 8018

1 818-818

1 318 8180

818 818-81803

1 818018 8180

1 81808 8180

81 81808-811

1 818 811

818 188 31818

81808 188 81801

81818-8180

1 01808 818

1 81801 8180

1 81808 18 180180

81808 188 8180180

1 81808 818

1 81808 818

818 188 0180

1 81808 8180

818 18 01808

1 818-8180

1 81801 81801

1 81801 8180

1 81801 81801

හැදී වැඩුණු සිංහල බෞද්ධ
 භික්ෂුණියක වූවාය. ඔහු, ඔහුගේ
 සිංහල භික්ෂුණියක වූවාය.

පරිපාලන ප්‍රතිපත්ති, ප්‍රතිපාදන, ප්‍රතිපාදන, ප්‍රතිපාදන

[MISCELLANEOUS SENTENCES, PROVERBS, &C.]

Ლ ႦႏႏႦႏ ႦႏႏႦ-Ⴆႏႏ.

ጊ 338161-ፀጢፀፀ14ፐ 31ፐፓ.

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ἢ ΘῆΚΙΩΓ-ΟΛΥΘ ΠΙΩΝΥ.

୧ ଗଞ୍ଜାମର ଲୁଗାପିନ୍ଧା ଲୋକ.

၁ ဓမ္မဒါနဝါရုံ ဝိပဿနာ-ပညာရပ်.

ପ୍ରାୟଶଃ ଏହି ଶୃଙ୍ଖଳାଟି ସମାପ୍ତ ହେଉଛି ।

၇ မိမိတို့သည် ဤသို့ ပြောကြားသည်။

අත්තන මැරුනු මෙම මැණික්.

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ଘୋଷଣା କରୁଅଛୁ ।

ନଘାଳିତା ଦୃଢ଼ତା ଗୁଣ ଶୁଦ୍ଧି ଶୁଦ୍ଧି.

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ജി ഹരി ഓമന 13 ഡിസംബർ 1950.

1. DID IZ DALLER DLYD.

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 2. ലെഖനം പരിശോധിക്കുക.

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NOTES ON THE ENGLISH SOUNDS.

THE Visible Speech Letters represent an analysis of sounds which is much more minute than any that has been attempted in pronouncing dictionaries; and the 'Universal Alphabet' consequently enables distinctions to be presented to the eye which would be impossible of discrimination by means of ordinary letters. The nicest of these shades of difference are, however, real distinctions to the ear; and, indeed, upon such elementary minutiae all the *characteristics* of utterance—such as vulgar, pedantic, dialectic, or foreign—mainly depend.

Notwithstanding the number of elements into which English speech is analysed in this Work, the Native learner is not inconvenienced by the variety; while the Foreign learner is importantly assisted by it. The benefit of the orthoepic accuracy will be progressively experienced by vernacular readers; but at first they will pronounce words as *wholes*, with many points of difference, and without being able to 'spell' their sounds or to pronounce all the letters of a word with individual correctness. The beginner should not attempt to follow the refinements of the Alphabet with theoretical precision. An insensible comparison of letter with letter will ultimately give proficiency without special study; and original differences of pronunciation will in this way become gradually assimilated to the standard of uniformity.

This power of direction and correction is inherent in the mutually related symbols of Visible Speech; but familiarity with common letters does not in any degree advance a speaker's orthoepic knowledge. Thus: ask any person to pronounce the *elements* of a word with the *same* sounds which he gives to them in the verbal combination, and not one individual in a hundred will be found able to perform this analysis with exactitude.

Learners of Visible Speech should first thoroughly master the CONSONANTS. When these are known, the greater part of the words in any *vernacular* sentence will be intelligible, without a precise knowledge of the vowels. The symbols of the latter may therefore be left to be familiarized by practice; or they may be mastered one by one, as the learner's ear becomes capable of appreciating their differences of sounds.





To make this matter perfectly clear: { suppose
{ s-pp-se
{ all vowels to be represented by one invariable
{ -ll v- -ls t- b- r-pr-s-nt-d b- -ne -nv-r-ble

{ mark—such as a hyphen—any person knowing
{ m-rk—s-ch -s h-ſh-n—-n- p-rs-n kn--ng
{ only the consonant letters, would be able to
{ -nl- th- c-us-n-nt l-tt-rs, w-ld b- -ble t-
{ recognize a large proportion of the words of
{ r-c-gn-ze l-rge pr-p-rt-n -f th- w-rds -f
{ *his own language* from this imperfect writing.
{ h-s -n l-ng--ge fr-m th-s -mp-rf-ct wr-t-ng.
It is therefore obvious that the number of vowel marks might be multiplied indefinitely without affecting this power of recognition, which is independent of *any* vowel distinctions.

It is to be borne in mind, further, that the Visible Speech consonants represent exact *sounds*, and that consequently the consonant 'skeleton' of a word is free from the ambiguities of *silent* and *variable* letters, such as the preceding illustration exemplifies.

The pronunciation indicated in the READING EXERCISES in this Work is that of educated vernacular usage. The sounds of 'unaccented' vowels, generally termed 'obscure,' are accurately *defined*; and the principles which govern such changes are thus made manifest in the symbols. These principles are detailed in the 'Inaugural Edition of Visible Speech,' to which the Orthoepical Reader is referred.

The abrupt *non-vocal* articulation of the 'liquids' *l, m, n, ng*, when before non-vocal consonants, is exhibited in the printing of such words as *felt, lamp, tent, think*, &c. In deliberate pronunciation, the voiceless *l, m, &c.*, receive an initial *trace* of vocality from the preceding vowel; but if an attempt be made to *prolong* the 'liquid' without altering its vernacular effect, the characteristic voicelessness of the latter will be demonstrated to the ear. The peculiarity of 'foreign' pronunciation of these English syllables arises simply from the undue *vocality* which is given to the *l, m, &c.*

The effect of the distinctive phoneticism of this system may be illustrated in the word 'mention.' Roman letters could only analyze this word into the two syllables 'men shun;' but the compact accentual utterance of 'mention' differs in two respects from that of these monosyllables. The *n* of 'men' is nearly or altogether *non-vocal* before the non-vocal *sh*; and the *vowel* sound in 'tion,' while it resembles that of 'short u,' is not *quite* the same. Thus   (*men shun*;)   (*mention*.)

Even 'accented' syllables, in common words, when pronounced without emphasis, are liable to

the same 'obscuring' as ordinary unaccented syllables. Thus the syllable 'self' in the 'reciprocal pronouns' *itself, himself, myself*, &c., (unless the words are emphatic) has not precisely the vowel quality of the same syllable in 'selfish.'

Monosyllables also are similarly affected in unemphatic pronunciation; as the word 'them,' which has distinctly two sounds in the sentence 'I told them (ŋlθ) it was for them (ŋlθ) only.' The word 'that' has also two sounds; the one when it is a 'conjunctive' or 'relative,' and the other when it is a 'demonstrative' particle; as in the sentence 'I know that (ŋlθ) that (ŋlθ) is the one.' So with 'had,' 'has,' 'and,' 'there,' 'for,' and other common words, which will be found variously written, according to their pronunciation in the 'Reading Exercises.'

The two sounds of R are, of course, distinguished; the 'consonant' sound (ϙ) being heard only when the R is followed by a vowel; and the 'glide' sound (ʏ) in other cases.

The influence of R on a preceding vowel is also illustrated. Thus the vowels in *ail* and *air*, *road* and *roar*, *pool* and *poor*, present the very appreciable varieties, [ɛ, ɛ̃, ɛ̄, ɛ̅].

These 'little' differences pass unheeded by vernacular speakers; but they become *shibboleths* in the mouths of persons who have not acquired the native habit.

The vowels *ai* and *oa*, when not before R,—as in *fail, foal*, &c.—are distinguished by a 'gliding' pronunciation which is peculiarly *English*. This delicate shading of the *ā* towards the closer *ē*, and of the *ō* towards the corresponding *oo*, is indicated in the writing of such words by the appropriate 'glides' after the radical vowel.

Provincial and foreign pronunciations of *ā* and *ō* are characterized by the absence of the gliding quality; while, in the Metropolis, the habit of gliding these vowels creates the vulgar peculiarity of altering the *initial* part of the vowels; so that *ā* encroaches on *ī*, and *ō* on *ou*.

The sound of *ū* as in *new*, &c., is, when fully pronounced, analyzed into *yoo*; but the common softening of the 'consonant' *y* (ϙ) into a 'glide' (ʏ) in this combination, is introduced in the 'Reading Exercises.'

The study of the new science of 'Visible Speech'—as treated of in the Inaugural Volume of 'Universal Alphabets'—will be greatly facilitated to those who make use of this little Work as a preliminary. It may seem to some that, in the order of publication, this should have *preceded* the larger Work; but a foundation must always be laid before a super-structure can be raised. The Inaugural Volume lays the foundation for all Languages; the present Work erects the English 'wing' of the cosmopolitan edifice.

Press Critics have experienced considerable difficulty in dealing with the *general* design—which, without oral exemplifications, cannot be mastered cursorily; but these difficulties will, it is hoped, be removed by a perusal of this

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